

SHOWING COMPASSION

(Mr. TONKO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TONKO. I rise today to share a passage from Proverbs 31:8-9: "If a man shuts his ears to the cry of the poor, he too will cry out and not be answered."

Madam Speaker, let us heed that cry. I encourage my colleagues to open our ears today during this holiday season and hear the compassionate cry of the working poor and middle income families back home. In my congressional district alone, some 6,400 people who lost their jobs through no fault of their own will be without their earned unemployment lifeline by the end of this month, unless we act. At the same time, my colleagues in this Chamber are worried about people that own estates or make millions and billions of dollars each and every year.

Let us show compassion for our neighbors and family members by standing up for the working poor and our middle income families. We should continue to provide tax cuts for the middle class community and extend unemployment insurance.

IN RECOGNITION OF LOVELL JAMES WRIGHT

(Mr. TERRY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. TERRY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize James Wright for his 10 years of public service in my district staff. Throughout his career in our office, James has consistently demonstrated a genuine willingness to help others and improve our community. He has undertaken a number of projects in my district, such as a program to teach financial literacy to young adults, a "5 percent home ownership" initiative under the section 8 housing program, and an "entrepreneurship" program to create a critical mass in a struggling urban setting. He has also taken on a leadership role in an Omaha small business initiative in North Omaha.

All of these actions were directed at providing quality assistance to the people of Omaha. His positive attitude, dedication, and optimistic outlook are commendable attributes, and we're certainly appreciative of his outlook.

James is an outstanding member of the Omaha community. He loves our great city. He contributes to local and national charities and organizations as well as participates in the Omaha Community Playhouse. He's a dynamic individual with a wealth of knowledge. We thank him for his public service.

PRESERVING FOREIGN CRIMINAL ASSETS FOR FORFEITURE ACT OF 2010

(Ms. CHU asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. CHU. Madam Speaker, last year, Bobby Salcedo, a beloved elected official in my district, was brutally murdered by the Mexican drug cartels while visiting family in Durango, Mexico. While I am saddened by Bobby's loss, his death has led me to fight the dangerous drug cartels that thrive along our border. That is why I introduced the Preserving Foreign Criminal Assets Forfeiture Act, a bill that will make it easier for Federal police to seize the illicit assets of international criminal organizations.

Foreign criminals are able to protect hundreds of millions of dollars in dirty money by moving their proceeds abroad before U.S. police can seize them, enabling them to continue their illegal activities. With this bill, we will have another tool to fight the drug cartels by cutting off their lifeblood and allowing Federal law enforcement officials to seize these illicit assets.

OPPOSITION TO TAX DEAL

(Mr. FLAKE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. FLAKE. Madam Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the tax deal negotiated between congressional leadership and the White House. Although we have yet to see the language of the bill, it is clear that it will represent a level of spending that should be unacceptable to those who are serious about our ballooning deficit.

What is striking about this legislation is the failure for either party to make tough choices. Where are the cuts? Take, for example, the 2 percent payroll tax deduction. If it is a good idea to reduce the payroll tax, it is imperative that we couple it with a reduction in benefits on the other side; but we make no such choices here. Again, we eat a sumptuous meal and pass the bill on to our kids and our grandkids because we lack the decency to pay for it ourselves.

If we can't make difficult choices now, Madam Speaker, when will we? Are we waiting for our New Year's resolutions to kick in? We're just a few years away from the fate of Greece and Ireland, and is this the best we can do? We can and should do better.

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THE VIRGINIA DECISION

(Mr. COURTNEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. COURTNEY. Madam Speaker, Virginia Judge Henry Hudson's decision 2 days ago striking down one section of the Health Care Reform Act was about a lot less than all the noise in the last 24 hours. Despite the Virginia Attorney General's request, Judge Hudson did not strike down the whole law, and despite Virginia's request, he refused to delay its implementation.

That is good news for millions of young Americans now covered under

their parents' health plans due to the health care law's age 26 dependent coverage, good news for millions of seniors in the Medicare doughnut hole who will get a 50 percent discount on life-saving medication, and good news for seniors for whom Medicare will finally cover checkups, cancer screenings and flu vaccinations.

Unfortunately, Hudson did rule against the law's system of shared responsibility for all Americans to have coverage, which would stabilize a health insurance market that has been collapsing for the last 10 years and would provide access to Americans with preexisting conditions. Fortunately, two other judges have ruled the other way, upholding the Nation's need for a stable insurance market in interstate commerce.

One thing Hudson did get right in his decision was his conclusion where he said, "The final word will reside with a higher court."

Thank goodness.

NO DEAL TO THIS TAX DEAL

(Mr. PENCE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PENCE. Madam Speaker, since last summer, I have urged this Congress to take action to prevent a tax increase that would affect every American in January of next year. So I rise with a heavy heart this morning to simply announce to my colleagues that I believe the short-term tax deal negotiated by the White House and congressional leaders is a bad deal for taxpayers, will do little to create jobs, and I cannot support it.

Despite the fact that last November the American people did not vote for more deficits, more stimulus or more uncertainty in the Tax Code, that is just what this lame duck Congress is about to give them.

You know, Madam Speaker, there is a reason why article I, section 7 of the Constitution says that all bills for raising revenue are to originate here in the House of Representatives. It is because our Founders believed that, when it comes to the people's taxes, the people's House should always lead. If the process is wrong, then the policy is wrong. We perpetuate the uncertainty. It is built into our Tax Code. Uncertainty is the enemy of our prosperity, and frankly, we can provide assistance to families struggling in this economy by making the hard choices to pay for it without adding to the national debt.

The American people have spoken. Let's say no deal to this tax deal, and get a better deal out of this Congress 3 weeks from today.

YES, THERE IS A SANTA CLAUS

(Mr. DEFAZIO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DEFAZIO. Madam Speaker, today, the Senate with one vote will